

Century Eggs

Learn to make authentic Chinese century eggs (preserved eggs) at home. Traditional alkaline curing process creates unique creamy texture and rich flavor.

10 min
PREP

1h 30min
COOK

1h 40min
TOTAL

8
SERVINGS

Easy
DIFFICULTY

Century Eggs

Ingredients

- 12 egg
- 33 fl oz water
- 25 g black tea
- 50 g rock salt

Instructions

- 1 Prepare the alkaline solution**

Bring 33 fl oz water to a rolling boil in a large stainless steel pot over high heat. Add 25g black tea leaves and 50g salt, stirring with a stainless steel spoon until the salt completely dissolves, about 1-2 minutes.
- 2** Remove the pot from heat and let the tea mixture cool to room temperature, about 2-3 hours. Strain out all tea leaves using a fine-mesh strainer and discard them completely.
- 3** Work in a well-ventilated area and slowly add the sodium hydroxide to the cooled tea while stirring continuously with a stainless steel spoon. Stir until the powder dissolves completely and the solution is clear, about 3-4 minutes.
- 4 Cure the eggs**

Using tongs, carefully lower all 12 eggs one at a time into the alkaline solution, ensuring they are completely submerged. Cover the pot with a tight-fitting lid.
- 5** Store the covered pot in a cool, dark location at 15-21°C (60-70°F) for exactly 12 days without disturbing.
- 6** Remove the eggs with tongs and rinse each one thoroughly under cold running water for 30 seconds. Pat completely dry with paper towels and let air dry for 1 hour at room temperature.
- 7 Age the eggs**

Place the dried eggs in a sealed plastic bag, then store the bag inside a covered container in a cool, dark place at 15-18°C (59-64°F) for 24-30 days.
- 8 Apply wax coating**

Melt beeswax in a double boiler over medium heat, stirring occasionally until completely liquid and the temperature reaches 63-66°C (145-150°F).

- 9 Wearing food-safe gloves, dip each egg completely into the melted wax and lift out immediately. Apply 3 thin, even coats total, allowing each coat to solidify for 2 minutes between applications until the wax appears matte and firm.
- 10 **Final curing**
Store the wax-coated eggs in a cool, dry place at room temperature for 2 weeks before consuming. Remove the wax coating and peel the shell completely before serving.

Tips

Work in a well-ventilated area when preparing the sodium hydroxide solution, as it can produce strong fumes that irritate eyes and respiratory system.

Use protective gloves and safety glasses when handling sodium hydroxide, and add it slowly to the cooled tea mixture to prevent dangerous reactions.

Duck eggs produce the most traditional flavor and texture, but chicken eggs are perfectly acceptable and may be easier for beginners to source and handle.

Ensure eggs are completely dry before wax coating to prevent moisture from compromising the preservation process and potentially causing spoilage.

Apply multiple thin coats of beeswax rather than one thick layer for better coverage and easier removal when ready to eat.

Store wax-coated eggs in a consistently cool, dry location - temperature fluctuations can affect the curing process and final texture.

Test one egg after the minimum aging time to check texture and flavor development before consuming the entire batch.

Remove eggs from the alkaline solution using tongs or a slotted spoon to avoid direct contact with the caustic liquid.